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On the birational unboundedness of higher dimensional \mathbb{Q} -Fano varieties

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1 Introduction

By a \mathbb{Q} -Fano variety, we mean a normal projective \mathbb{Q} -factorial variety with only log terminal singularities whose anticanonical divisor is ample.

We say that a class of varieties \mathfrak{V} is **birationally bounded** if there is a morphism $f: \mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathcal{S}$ between algebraic schemes such that every variety in \mathfrak{V} is birational to one of the geometric fibres of f . We say that \mathfrak{V} is **birationally unbounded** if it is not birationally bounded.

Main theorem

Theorem 1. If $n \geq 6$ then the family of \mathbb{Q} -Fano n -folds defined over \mathbb{C} with Picard number one is birationally unbounded.

This result is known for 3-folds by the work of J. Lin [3].

Conjecture 2 (Borisov-Alexeev-Borisov). Fix $\epsilon > 0$. Then the family of \mathbb{Q} -Fano varieties of a given dimension with log discrepancy greater than ϵ is bounded.

Conjecture 2 is solved in the surface case by Alexeev and in the toric case by A. Borisov and V. Borisov. Theorem 1 shows that we cannot remove the restriction on log discrepancies from the hypothesis of Conjecture 2 even if we replace “boundedness” by “birational boundedness”.

Followings are some of the classes of \mathbb{Q} -Fano varieties which have been known to be bounded:

- Smooth Fano varieties (in arbitrary dimension) (cf. [1]).
- \mathbb{Q} -Fano 3-folds with canonical singularities (cf. [2]).
- Log terminal \mathbb{Q} -Fano pairs of bounded index (in arbitrary dimension) (cf. [4]).

2 Outline of the proof

Let a, l, m and n be positive integers, where a and l are odd. Put $b = (al - 1)/2$. Let \mathbb{k} be an algebraically closed field of char 2.

Step 1. Non-ruled \mathbb{Q} -Fano weighted hypersurfaces.

Let $k[x_0, \dots, x_n]$ and $k[x_0, \dots, x_n, y]$ be the graded rings whose gradings are given by $\deg x_i = 1$ for $0 \leq i \leq m$, $\deg x_i = a$ for $m+1 \leq i \leq n$ and $\deg y = b$. We define weighted projective spaces as follows.

- $P_k = \mathbb{P}_k(1, \dots, 1, \overbrace{a, \dots, a}^n, b) := \text{Proj } k[x_0, \dots, x_n, y]$.
- $Q_k = \mathbb{P}_k(1, \dots, 1, \overbrace{a, \dots, a}^n) := \text{Proj } k[x_0, \dots, x_n]$.

For $f = f(x_0, \dots, x_n) \in k[x_0, \dots, x_n]_{al}$ (the degree al part), we define

- $X_f := (y^2 x_0 - f(x_0, \dots, x_n) = 0) \subset P_k$.

Condition 3. (1) l is odd, $4 \leq n$ and $0 < m < n$.

(2) $n - m + 1 < l < 2(n - m)$.

Non-ruled weighted hypersurfaces

Theorem 4 ([5], Theorem 7.3). Assume that l, m and n satisfy Condition 3. Then, the following assertions hold for every odd integer $a > (m+1)/2$.

- (1) The weighted hypersurface $X_f \subset P_k$ of degree al defined over \mathbb{C} is a non-ruled \mathbb{Q} -Fano n -fold with Picard number one for a very general $f \in \mathbb{C}[x_0, \dots, x_n]_{al}$.
- (2) The weighted hypersurface $X_f \subset P_k$ of degree al defined over \mathbb{k} is not separably uniruled for a general $f \in \mathbb{k}[x_0, \dots, x_n]_{al}$.

Step 2. Construction of “large” birationally trivial families.

For fixed l, m and n satisfying Condition 3, let $\mathcal{X}_a \rightarrow \mathcal{S}_a$ be the family of weighted hypersurfaces $X_f \subset P_k$ of degree al defined over \mathbb{k} .

We say that a family of varieties is **birationally trivial** if every two members of the family are birational.

“Large” birationally trivial families

Lemma 5. Suppose that the family of \mathbb{Q} -Fano n -folds defined over \mathbb{C} with Picard number one is birationally bounded. Then, there exists a constant R such that, for every odd integer $a > m+1$ and a general point $s_a \in \mathcal{S}_a$, there is a closed subvariety \mathcal{B}_a of \mathcal{S}_a with the following properties:

- (1) \mathcal{B}_a parametrizes a birationally trivial family.
- (2) \mathcal{B}_a passes through s_a .
- (3) $\dim \mathcal{S}_a - \dim \mathcal{B}_a \leq R$.

Remark 6. Suppose that l, m, n satisfy Condition 3. Let $a_i > m+1$ be an odd integer and $f_i \in \mathbb{C}[x_0, \dots, x_n]_{a_i l}$ be a very general element for $i = 1, 2$. We can prove that if X_{f_1} and X_{f_2} are birational (over \mathbb{C}) then their reduction mod 2 models are also birational (over \mathbb{k}). This observation is crucial in the proof of Lemma 5.

Step 3. Bounding birationally trivial families in char 2.

Let $f \in \mathbb{k}[x_0, \dots, x_n]_{al}$ be a general element. We denote by $f: \mathcal{X} := X_f \dashrightarrow Q_k$ the restriction of the natural projection $P_k \dashrightarrow Q_k$.

If we are over \mathbb{k} , l, m, n satisfy Condition 3 and $a > m+1$, then there is a big line bundle $\mathcal{L} \subset \Omega_Y^{n-1}$ on a smooth model Y of X . By analyzing the rational map associated to \mathcal{L} , we obtain the following.

Birational invariance of the map f

Lemma 7. Suppose that l, m and n satisfy $l < 2(n - m) - 1$ in addition to Condition 3. Let $a > m+1$ be an odd integer and $f \in \mathbb{k}[x_0, \dots, x_n]_{al}$ a general element. Then, the map $f: X_f \dashrightarrow Q_k$ is a birational invariant.

This means that, if $g \in \mathbb{k}[x_0, \dots, x_n]_{a'l}$ is also general for some $a' > m+1$ and there is a birational map $\gamma: X_f \dashrightarrow X_{g'}$, then $a = a'$, γ is an isomorphism and there is an automorphism σ of Q_k such that the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} X_f & \xrightarrow{\gamma} & X_{g'} \\ \pi_f \downarrow & & \downarrow \pi_{g'} \\ Q_k & \xrightarrow{\sigma} & Q_k \end{array}$$

commutes.

By Lemma 7, we can bound the dimension of birationally trivial subfamilies of $\mathcal{X}_a/\mathcal{S}_a$.

Bounding birationally trivial families

Lemma 8. Suppose that l, m and n satisfy $l < 2(n - m) - 1$ in addition to Condition 3. Then, for every odd integer $a > m+1$ and a general point $s_a \in \mathcal{S}_a$, there is a closed subvariety \mathcal{W}_a of \mathcal{S}_a with the following properties:

- (1) \mathcal{W}_a parametrizes the members which are birational to the member corresponds to s_a .
- (2) $\dim \mathcal{S}_a - \dim \mathcal{W}_a \rightarrow \infty$ as $a \rightarrow \infty$.

If $n \geq 6$, then we can find l, m and n satisfying $l < 2(n - m) - 1$ in addition to Condition 3. Now Theorem 1 follows from Lemma 5 and 8.